Meet Flora Mexicana. By M. WALTER PESMAN. 280 pp., fold-out vegetation map, illustrated. Dale S. King, Six Shooter Canyon, Globe, Arizona. 1962. $4.00 and $5.00 paper-back; $6.00 cloth.

Mr. Pesman has written a delightful and original book about the roadside flora of Mexico. *Meet Flora Mexicana* is the first nontechnical work to be published on the area covered. In the words of the author, "We realized that many other tourists would want information about the very plants that attracted our attention, mainly those along the highways," and so the present volume was born. The role of the author's enthusiastic wife in the project is aptly expressed by an appreciative husband in the accolade "Blessings on a wife who is a front-seat driver!" On four trips to Mexico, Mrs. Elizabeth Pesman was chauffeur and an inspiration to her husband in various ways.

Two-hundred and seventy original line drawings, all made on the spot by the author, illustrate the work. Included are some of the showiest and most unusual plants to be found as one travels by car along the principal roadways of the country, particularly in the winter months. Mexico is divided into 11 floral zones, i.e. desert, mesquite and grassland, thorn forest, tropical evergreen forest, and so forth. Once a person finds his geographical location on the colored fold-out map, an unknown plant is determined by comparison with the illustrations and the accompanying brief descriptions. Each plant is provided with a Spanish and an English vernacular name, as well as a botanical name. A bibliography of some references to the literature on Mexican botany ought to please many arm-chair users of the work, and a printed rule in inches and centimeters will please users who wish to use the book in the field.

Although written for the layman, professional botanists and others ought to profit by this book. Some might criticize it for incompleteness, but this book is not intended to be a comprehensive technical flora. As the title suggests, readers are merely introduced to the Mexican flora through the eyes of the author; he hopes "it will do something to make you feel more at home among the many, many interesting plants" of Mexico. Perhaps the present work will encourage others to do better, since the author hopes to whet appetites and stimulate curiosities. Laurels to M. Walter Pesman for being the first to write a popular handbook about the plants of our good neighbor south of the border. The publishers are to be highly commended for the pleasing format, the very attractive cover, and the relatively modest cost of the book.—FREDERICK G. MEYER, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland.

NOTES AND NEWS

NOTE ON DAMAGE TO THE HOOKER OAK. This well-known specimen of *Quercus lobata* Nee., located in Chico, California's Bidwell Park, was severely damaged during a storm which battered the West Coast on October 12 and 13, 1962. Approximately half of the tree, named by Annie E. K. Bidwell in honor of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, was broken off 25–40 feet above the ground on the southeast side, ruining its symmetry. The City of Chico is spending $5,000 this winter to shore up and prune the remaining branches and to prune the roots. Long-range plans are being prepared by local officials for restoration of the tree through continued seasonal pruning, but its future appearance is problematical. A plaque placed at the site in 1953 by the Native Daughters of the Golden West indicates the estimated age of the tree to be 1,000 years, and the press has frequently reported its age as 1,100 years. However, ring counts of the largest branch broken off during the storm suggest that the age may be no more than 400 years. This coincides with a recent estimate by California Extension Forester Emeritus Woodbridge Metcalfe. Dimensions of the Hooker Oak given in 1953 are as follows: height, 96 ft.; circumference of tree 8 ft. from ground, 29 ft.; spread of north and south branches, 153 ft.; circumference of outside branches, 481 ft.; lineal measurement—largest south branch, 111 ft.; diameter of